Change in WTO proposals

865. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had pressed for change in WTO proposals in the interest of our farmers and nascent industries during hard negotiation in Geneva in May, 2008;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the ultimate outcome of the discussions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Throughout the Doha Round negotiations on agriculture and Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), India has been voicing its concerns strongly, wherever it felt that the proposals under consideration had fallen short of its expectations and requirements.

In the agriculture negotiations, substantial and effective reductions in domestic support and tariffs in agriculture by developed countries, while enabling developing countries to protect and promote the interests of their low income and resource poor farmers, is a key priority for India. India has been working closely with its developing country partners in the G-20 and G-33 coalitions towards this end.

In the negotiations on NAMA, India, along with its coalition partners in the NAMA 11, has been negotiating for flexibilities that are both adequate and appropriate for protecting its sensitive sectors and nascent industries from the impact of tariff reductions or bindings.

(c) The Doha Round of trade negotiations is still in progress. A mini-Ministerial meeting was held at the WTO in July, 2008 with the objective of finalizing agriculture and NAMA modalities. The meeting, however, ended without reaching an agreement, because while progress was made on some issues, there were many others that could not be discussed at all or on which there were persisting differences amongst Members. Based on subsequent discussions at the WTO, revised draft proposals were issued on 6 December, 2008, which will be further discussed and negotiated.

India's poor ranking in business

866. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India was ranked 122nd amongst 181 countries by the World bank in case of doing business lower than even Pakistan; and

(b) whether Government has taken cognizance of this assessment and what reforms are proposed to facilitate doing of business in our country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir. India's rank is however comparable to that of other emerging economies including the BRIC countries (Brazil-125, Russia-120, China-83). Moreover, various recent studies have highlighted the growing attractiveness of India as an investment destination. India has been ranked as the 2nd most attractive destination for foreign direct investment by A.T. Kearney's 2007 Foreign Direct Investment Confidence Index and UNCTAD's 'World Investment Report, 2008'.

(b) The Government of India in partnership with various State Governments and Business Associations is making concerted efforts to make regulations conducive for business requirements. The regulatory reforms include setting up of single windows, reduction of documentation through composite forms for various licenses/permissions, computerization of services, simplification of taxes and payments, reduction of inspections, and dissemination of national and international best practices.

Growth in capital productivity

†867. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that heavy growth in the capital productivity in the country has been witnessed during the last years;

(b) if so, the estimates of growth of capital productivity during the period from 2002 to 2008;

(c) the names of those twenty five industries reporting maximum productivity growth; and

(d) the names of those five industries reporting minimum productivity growth?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) As per the analysis done by the National Productivity Council (NPC) based on the Prowess database of the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the capital productivity has been growing at a positive annual Compound Growth rate of 4.03% during the period 2002-2008.

(c) and (d) The details of names of those twenty five industries reporting maximum productivity growth and the names of those five industries reporting minimum productivity growth is enclosed as a Statement.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.